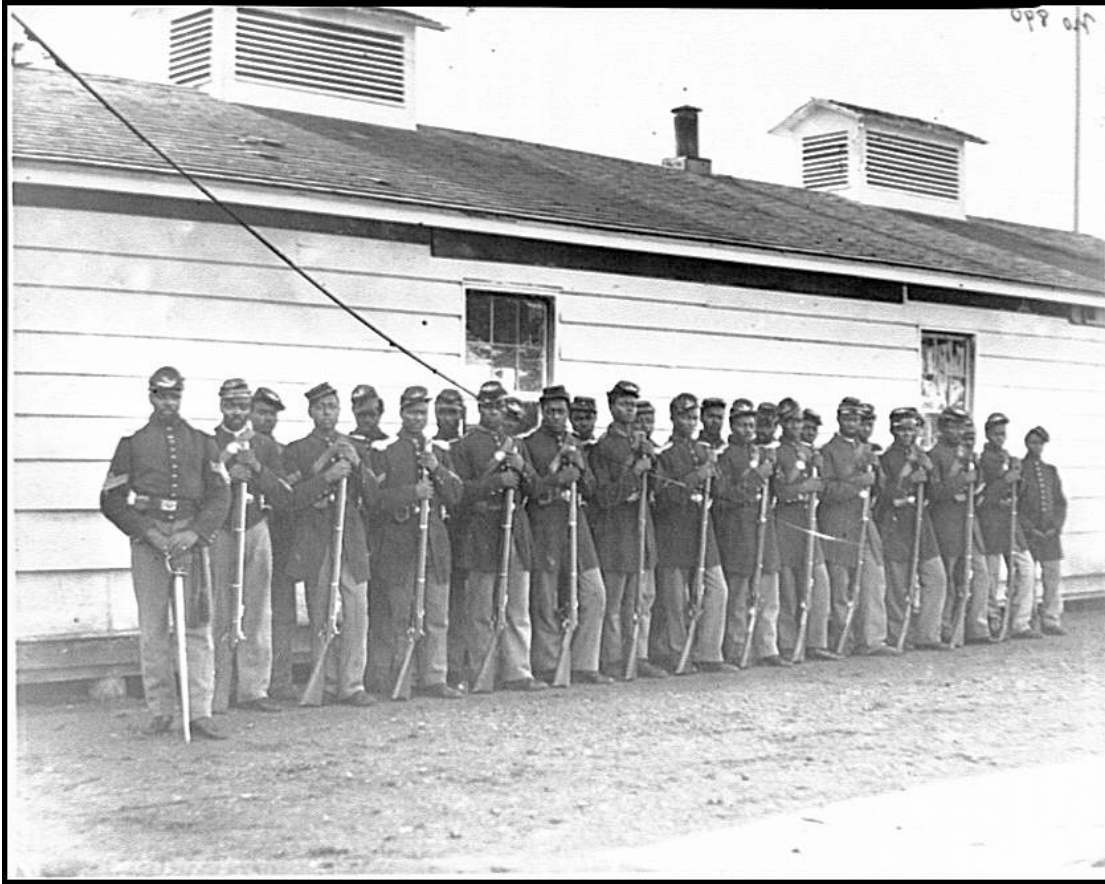


BLACK REGIMENTS IN THE CIVIL WAR



District of Columbia. Company E, 4th US Colored Infantry at Fort Lincoln. American Civil War Picture Album. 18 July 2008. <http://americancivilwar.com/pictures/colored_infantry.jpg>

- Well over 180,000 African Americans served in the Union Army and Navy
- Soldiers and sailors included both freemen and runaway slaves
- Congress passed laws permitting African Americans to serve on July 12, 1862
- Enlistment began after Emancipation Proclamation in September of 1862
- They faced the prejudice of whites who believed they lacked both skill and courage
- In October of 1862 the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteers pushed back the Confederates
- On July 17, 1863, the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteers forced Confederates to retreat at Honey Springs in the Indiana Territory
- In the wake of that victory, General Blunt wrote, "I never saw such fighting as was done by the Negro regiment....The question that negroes will fight is settled; besides they make better soldiers in every respect than any troops I have ever had under my command."
- On July 18, 1863, the 54th Massachusetts regiment courageously attacked Fort Wagner, South Carolina

- Congress did not guarantee equal pay for African American soldiers until June 15, 1864
- From 1864-1865, African Americans fought in every major campaign of the war except Sherman's "March to the Sea"
- African American fighters at Fort Pillow, Tennessee, suffered a massacre at the hands of Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest's troops
- On September 29, 1864, the Eighteenth Corps' African American division charged the slopes at New Market Heights, winning 14 African American soldiers the Medal of Honor
- On March 23, 1865, Jefferson Davis authorized the raising of slave companies to fight against the Union – promising those who survived their freedom (though few companies were raised in the 16 days before the war ended)
- All told, African Americans constituted ten percent of the Union Army, and about a third of them lost their lives in the cause
- In 1873, Henry Ossian Flipper became the first African American to be appointed to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Upon graduation, he became the first African American commissioned as an officer in the regular U.S. Army.

For more information about African American soldiers and sailors, click on

<http://www.africanamericans.com/BlackUnionSoldiersCivilWar.htm>

and

http://history-world.org/black_regiments.htm

For information about African American soldiers from Indiana, click on

http://civilwarindiana.com/black_soldiers.html

For more information about Lt. Henry O. Flipper, click on

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured_documents/henry_o_flipper/print_friendly.html

To learn about boy soldiers in the Civil War, read *Pink and Say* by Patricia Polacco (Ages 4-9)